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ABSTRACT

This issue of "Basic Education" is devoted to the arts in education as a concern that should be addressed in a time of new priorities for the curriculum. Five articles and a book review are included. The opening article, "The State of the Arts in Education: Envisioning Active Participation By All" (Virginia Robinson), emphasizes that the study of the arts is basic, and that instruction should include performance, art history, and aesthetics. The next two articles are "A Viewpoint on the Arts as Reinforcing the Basic Academic Skills of Students" (Thomas and Dennie P. Wolf), and "How Schools Have Lost Federal Arts Education Funds Since 1982." "The Specialized Arts Schools: Alternatives for the Talented" (Junius Eddy) describes characteristics of specialized arts schools as gleaned from a conference survey. "Rockefeller Fund Gives Tangible Rewards to Excellence in the Arts" is the title of the fifth article. In the final article, Virginia Robinson reviews Howard Gardner's book "Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences." (RM)

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Virginia Robinson, Editor

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CBE's informative monthly bulletin

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The State Of The Arts In Education: Envisioning Active Participation By All

In the third volume of the *Paideia* trilogy, published in October, John Van Doren points out that the Paideia philosophy of a common, excellent education for all children "envisions the active participation of children, throughout their basic schooling, in every kind of art appropriate to their stage of development."

"We also think the fine arts cannot be omitted from the course of study, or short-changed in it, without damage to all the other arts," Van Doren said.

The fine arts which the Paideia Proposal would include in the curriculum are music, drama, dance, drawing, painting, sculpture or modeling, and crafts.

Students would be expected to achieve a level of competence somewhere between finished, professional skills and "the awkwardness, ignorance, and inarticulateness" with respect to the arts found in most of the school population today, in at least one of the arts.

To that end, Van Doren suggests regular, informal attention to guided practice in the lower grades and at least three years of weekly classes devoted to "symbolic" (music, drama, dance) and "material" (drawing, painting, sculpture, crafts) arts in high school.

He also notes that although any fine arts program is largely a matter of coaching to develop skills, students should also have the experience of discussing good music and good works of art, not as a way to "learn the subject," but in order to see that insights into works of art are really possible.

This is very close to the position of the Council for Basic Education, which believes that study of the arts is basic, but that instruction should emphasize art history and aesthetics, as well as performance.

As this issue of *Basic Education* goes to press in December 1984, there is mixed evidence about the status of the arts in education, following two years in which public and professional attention has been focused on improving education in "academic" subjects, predominantly mathematics and science.

As an example of some developing dilemmas, a number of states have mandated a new year of credit in the fine or performing arts as a high school graduation requirement.

But the same states have, in many cases, also increased the number of credits they will require in mathematics, science, English, and foreign languages, which may have the ironic effect of making it difficult for students to study art or music in high school for *more* than one year.

In a 1984 publication, *Arts in Education, Education in Arts*, the National Endowment for the Arts notes that four of six recent reports on education give some degree of support for the arts, if only "a generous nod," but two do not mention the arts at all, and only one proposes to make the arts a significant requirement for college entrance.

The reports also appear to differ widely on how "academic" the arts should be.

The College Board, in its report on what students should know and be able to do in preparation for college, recommends that high school students develop comprehensive knowledge and skills in history, theory, criticism, and performance in at least one art form.

The National Commission on Excellence in Education asks that the arts require "rigorous effort" and "the same level of performance as the Basics." The Education Commission of the States would eliminate "soft, nonessential courses."

All of these would seem to imply that the arts should become more academic, the National Endowment points out, and yet John Goodlad, in his book, *A Place Called School*, noted that one of the worst qualities he observed in arts classes at all levels of education was the degree to which they appeared to be governed by "the characteristics which are best described as 'school'—following the rules, finding the one right answer, practicing the lower cognitive processes."

The arts classes he encountered "did not convey the picture of individual expression and artistic creativity toward which one is led by the rhetoric of forward-looking practice in the field," Goodlad said.

This issue of *Basic Education* is devoted to the arts in education as a concern that we should all address in a time of new priorities for the curriculum.

A Viewpoint On The Arts As Reinforcing The Basic Academic Skills Of Students

By Thomas and Dennie P. Wolf

In 1983, in a Gallup Poll, people were asked what courses should be required of public high school students who did not plan to attend college.

The highest number of respondents (87 percent) said that mathematics should be a requirement. English ranked second (83 percent) and vocational training was third (74 percent).

At the very bottom of the list, in a dead heat for tenth place, were art and music, at 16 percent.

The same poll also asked what courses should be required of students going on to college, and the responses reflected only slightly higher ratings for art (19 percent) and music (18 percent).

These low rankings reflected a deterioration of the public's level of approval for required art and music courses. In a similar poll conducted only two years earlier, art and music had received a 20 percent approval rating.

Why do people believe that courses in the arts—visual art, music, theater, dance, creative writing—are peripheral to a basic education for all students?

Certainly there are some who argue that the arts should not take up space in the public school curriculum, on the grounds that they are expensive, they do not prepare students for a vocation, and they are not practical.

Others believe the arts are important, but say they should not be required of all students. They subscribe to a commonly held belief that arts courses should be reserved for students who are gifted.

Concern for talented students is legitimate and compelling.

But another question must be asked: Can the arts contribute, and what can they contribute, to the development of *all* students?

Certainly, we hope that instruction in the arts will increase students' aesthetic sensitivity and capacity for enjoyment.

But we suggest that arts instruction can also enhance the basic curriculum by teaching students to observe, to reason, to study, to read (in the broadest sense), to speak and listen, to compute, and to write.

Take the example of students in a visual art class trying to paint a still life based on a number of objects on the table before them. The task requires intense powers of *observation*. Students must view the objects with extreme care, taking into account such things as contour, shape, positive and negative space, light and shadow, color, tonality, and three-dimensionality.

A similar kind of intensive observation is required of dance students, who must learn to make their bodies recreate movements which they see executed by others.

Reasoning is a skill all students need. It includes an ability to use concepts and generalizations, to distinguish between fact and opinion, and to draw reasonable conclusions based on evidence. All of these tasks are required of art students. They must understand the meaning of broad concepts such as tempo or expression or three-dimensionality; they must learn to distinguish between people's opinions about a work of art and the evidence presented by the work itself; they must be able to draw certain conclusions about art works (their own and others'), based not on their personal tastes but on objective standards.

Reading is another basic skill developed in arts classes, particularly in theater and creative writing courses. Consider theater students preparing a scene from a play. They must learn to read the text of the play at several levels—skimming quickly for themes and overview of character, reading slowly and orally for expressive content, reading the same material repeatedly for memorization and mastery of lines, and reading silently for deeper meaning.

Creative writing students can be assumed to do a good deal of reading, studying examples of good writing, reading them carefully for imagery, expressiveness, and meaning. Certainly they will develop writing skills in ways they are not likely to encounter in other school classes.

There is probably general agreement that skill in *studying* is one of the most important basic abilities students can develop. Here again, note the experiences of arts students: in music, dance, and theater, students develop practice routines; visual art students must engage in long-term planning of projects; and all arts students must learn to follow instructions carefully and to synthesize knowledge and apply it to new situations.

Students can even enhance *mathematical* skills in arts classes. Band and choral students use numbers constantly in developing understanding of rhythm, intervals, and basic harmony. Dance students must learn to subdivide time and space with

great accuracy. Visual art students learn to solve two-dimensional problems on a grid and to use calculations for color mixing and glaze calculations.

It's possible to make a very good case for the arts for all students on utilization and development of basic skills, alone, but of course it is equally important that the arts often provide a fresh and important perspective on the subject matter offered in other basic academic subjects such as social studies, science, mathematics, English, and foreign language.

But enhancement of basic skills and subjects is not all the arts offer. They provide some unique insights and abilities as well, helping students to develop an appreciation of the expressive and emotional aspects of their lives and work in an environment (the school) which often asks them to put their feelings aside for more objective problemsolving.

Thus, the argument that arts courses should be a requirement for all students is not unlike the argument for requiring science or any other basic subject in the school curriculum. Students do not study science because they will become scientists (though some may), nor are they required to study science because they have an aptitude or "gift" for the subject. Rather, schools require science courses of all students because the subject provides fundamental academic skills. These skills are part of the foundation of all learning, and students who do not acquire them will be at a disadvantage in later life.

Similarly, only if students are offered meaningful arts experiences in school can they develop the full range of fundamental learning skills that will assist them throughout their lives, regardless of the career paths they choose.

Thomas and Dennie P. Wolf are principal coauthors of The Arts Go to School, and of a forthcoming publication of The College Board which will amplify the Board's 1983 recommendation that the arts be one of six basic academic subjects to be studied by secondary school students preparing for college.

Thomas Wolf was principal investigator of a recent arts education study for the National Endowment for the Arts. Dennie P. Wolf is Director of the Early Symbolization Project at Project Zero, an arts education research project of the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

How Schools Have Lost Federal Arts Education Funds Since 1982

Since 1982, the U.S. Department of Education has provided no direct financial aid to elementary and secondary schools for arts education.

A modest competitive-grant program enacted by Congress in 1978, for which appropriations never exceeded $1.25 million a year, went out of business when the arts program and 29 other federal education programs were folded into a block grant to the states which became effective in 1982.

While most (80 percent) of the block grant funds eventually make their way to local school districts, and arts education is one of the purposes for which they may be spent, it appears on the basis of informal surveys that few, if any, school districts are using block grant money for arts programs.

A federal program which provided support for arts education by indirection, through the desegregation process, also ceased to exist in 1982 but has been reactivated by Congress this year. Under that law, the Emergency School Aid Act, grants will be available to desegregating school districts for magnet schools, which can include arts-oriented schools.

Another federal agency, the National Endowment for the Arts, which Congress created in 1965 "to encourage and assist the nation's cultural resources," provides limited matching funds for which schools are eligible to apply, for special projects to develop materials, create advocacy mechanisms (such as workshops), or expand the arts and education skills of educators and administrators.

The Endowment also makes grants to state arts agencies for "artist residencies" which place practicing professional artists in various kinds of institutions, including schools, for periods ranging from 10 days to more than two months.

There is almost no indication that states are moving to replace federal funds for arts education, and at the local level, funding seems to be related largely to how enthusiastic or sophisticated local advocates of arts programs may be, and how much pressure they are willing or able to apply to local school boards.

The Specialized Arts Schools: Alternatives For The Talented

By Junius Eddy

In the last several years, a spate of studies, reports, and articles has focused on an institution which in the view of many educators, parents, and citizens-at-large had become something of an educational anachronism—the alternative school.

The authors of these accounts seem, collectively, to have taken a fresh look at this nearly 20-year-old idea, in all of its current manifestations—magnet schools, specialty schools, selective schools—and found it not only alive, but doing well and growing steadily.

One distinctive grouping of schools within this broad genre (which Mary Anne Raywid, a Hofstra University education professor who has studied the movement, calls "schools of choice") has proliferated in rather spectacular fashion over the last decade or so.

These are schools that place strong emphasis on the visual and performing arts and offer this as an educational option to students who have marked artistic interests or talents.

From a handful in the late 1960s, specialized schools of the arts have grown in number until today it is estimated that 80 or 85—some say more than 100—are in operation or in various stages of development in the United States and Canada.

Last year, representatives of North American schools of the arts came together at New Haven's Educational Center for the Arts, to bring into existence the "Network of Performing and Visual Arts Schools."

This October, the new network convened for its second conference, at the North Carolina School of the Arts, a largely state-supported residential school established in 1964 and now offering programs at the high school and college level.

Of 25 visual and performing arts schools represented at the second conference, 15 were new to the group; eight school systems sent representatives because they have arts schools in purposeful planning stages.

In structure, the schools fall into five broad categories:

•*Resident schools of the arts* include full-time boarding schools such as Interlochen, in Michigan (private), and state-supported high schools in Alabama, Florida, and North Carolina.
•*Nonresident arts schools* attract students from throughout their districts and offer intensive instruction in the arts as well as strong academic programs.

Eleven of the 25 schools, in cities such as Baltimore, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Washington, D.C., are of this general type.
•*Arts schools-within-a-school* are essentially mini-high schools operating within larger comprehensive high schools; Providence, R.I., and Portland, Ore., are examples of this type.
•*"Arts Only" schools*, like New Haven's Educational Center for the Arts and New Orleans' Center for the Creative Arts, offer a half-day program in the arts only, usually in the afternoon, for students who take their academic courses at their home high schools.
•*Resident summer schools of the arts* are also "arts only"; they enroll talented students from a state or region for summer enrichment programs; four such schools were present at the conference, including the Governor's Schools in South Carolina and Vermont.

Other characteristics of the specialized arts schools, as gleaned from a conference survey, included the following:
•All but two were established after 1970, and most after 1976.
•Eight were originally created as a result or by-product of the "magnet school" approach to court-ordered or voluntary desegregation.
•Grade spans in the schools vary widely; some are 7-12, others 4-12; one is a K-8 "arts only" school serving a six-school complex; only eight are regular 9-12 high schools.
•Enrollments generally range between 200 and 500 students, though some report enrollments of 750 to 1,200.
•Of those who reported it, the cost per student ranged mostly between $2,000 and $4,500. (One reported $300 and another $10,000!)
•In nearly all the schools, the curriculum focuses on the four major arts disciplines—visual arts, music, drama, and dance; 10 schools also offer creative writing, and eight offer work in the media arts.
•Almost all the schools said they admit students selectively, relying most heavily on auditions or portfolios and interviews as their primary screening instruments.

About a third also said they give some weight to a student's academic record.

•Virtually all the schools reported that they make regular use of professional artists on a part-time basis to augment their teaching staffs; four reported total reliance on noncertified artist-teachers.
•A surprising number of the public schools said they receive aid from private foundations.
•And finally, all but a handful of the schools described what they are offering as a "preprofessional program," rather than a "basic arts education."

The schools are clearly banded together to make common cause because of their arts orientation, which makes them educationally different and therefore never really safe from bureaucratic encroachment, but also because the problems they must grapple with are in many ways different from those facing conventional schools.

Looking at these specialized schools in a larger context, there are questions about the effects of drawing off into artistic enclaves the most talented students in a school system, who might otherwise be expected to stimulate and enliven the teaching of the arts.

Generally, the teachers and administrators I talked to at the conference indicated they had experienced some initial resentment from teachers in regular schools, but that this had diminished over time.

Many stressed that they make special efforts to cooperate with other schools in recitals, art exhibits, and performances.

The extent to which the schools say they are preparing students for careers in the arts is also of some concern, though teachers told me they try to avoid raising unrealistic expectations in their students about the probabilities of jobs and success in the highly competitive arts world.

What does seem clear is that the arts schools are on the move today, and that they may be more secure than they have ever been before.

They have also helped to provide some rich new dimensions to the present-day concept of alternative schools, which, as Professor Raywid has written, "now represent the acceptance and institutionalization of diversity" in education.

Junius Eddy is a consultant on education and arts. He has worked as an arts advisor for the U.S. Office of Education and the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations.

For information about the Network of Performing and Visual Arts Schools, contact the Network at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, 35th and R Streets NW, Washington DC 20007, (202)282-0123.

Rockefeller Fund Gives Tangible Rewards To Excellence In The Arts

The degree to which the art-making process is misunderstood by parents, school administrators and teachers of other subjects is a constant source of surprise to most teachers of art, according to Jon Murray.

"Art-making is neither the mechanistic application of skills and techniques nor the passive representation of visual sensations. Nor is it—as it must often seem to those who have never tried it—the mindless flow of some innate, mysterious, inspirational juice. Like other forms of expression, art is a language, a context for interpreting experiences and constructing meanings. It is a visible manifestation of thought."

Murray is a teacher of art in Mamaroneck High School in New York. His school and nine others won $10,000 awards in 1982 from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, in the first year of a five-year effort to identify and reward extraordinary arts programs in elementary and secondary schools in the United States.

Mamaroneck High took its place in 1982 with other Rockefeller winners, including Swain County High in the Appalachian Mountains of western North Carolina, where the arts program has deep roots in the crafts tradition of the area and calls itself vocational because that is the only way the school can get federal funds to pay the teacher; and German Central Elementary School in McClellandtown, Pa., where children come from scarred and sagging company houses in an abandoned mining town to an elementary school where they dance in the halls, throw pots on the potters wheel, and broadcast tapes of school musical and dramatic productions to the surrounding community from a well equipped cable television control room.

In 1983, awards went to schools ranging from New York City's immense and famous High School of the Arts to a tiny K-8 school on the northern California coast, an entirely conventional high school in Elkhart, Indiana, and a mainly black grammar school in East Cleveland, Ohio, with a superb program in the history of art and classical music.

In February 1984, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund announced a new round of winners, in the third year of the arts awards program.

Like those that preceded them, this year's exemplary schools may do as they like with their $10,000 prizes, *except* that they must be used to enhance teaching of the arts.

The awards go this year to eight schools:

- Proviso East High School, Maywood, Ill.;
- Montezuma Creek Elementary School, Montezuma Creek, Utah;
- Garfield Elementary School, Medina, Ohio;
- Arts Magnet School, Dallas, Texas;
- Wyoming High School, Wyoming, Ohio;
- Blatchley Junior High School, Sitka, Alaska;
- Snyder High School, Snyder, Texas; and
- Germantown High School, Germantown, Tenn.

This brings to 28 the number of schools which have received awards.

Each year, the Fund commissions descriptive articles about its winners from talented young writers and poets.

In August this year, the Fund brought together in an August seminar 35 superior teachers it has singled out in the past three years, in award-winning schools and others, to study their special qualities and talents and draw on their knowledge and experience to inform further study of arts programs.

Also, the public schools identified by the Awards in Arts Education program are expected to be a major resource for a new program: exchanges of teams of arts educators with the Peoples Republic of China, in a research survey of precollege arts education in that country.

According to David Rockefeller, Jr., the exchanges are prompted in part by the fact that "Americans ... have been impressed—even astonished—by the artistic competence of young Chinese students who apparently received little formal training."

"What the Chinese know about recruiting and training young students, as well as assessing their progress, is not well understood outside of China," Rockefeller said. "The program will not only deepen understanding of the knowledge each country has, but provide new ways to share information that is available but not generally known."

Our Frames Of Mind: A Researcher Suggests We Have Many Intelligences

Reviewed by Virginia Robinson

Frames of Mind:
The Theory of Multiple Intelligences
By Howard Gardner
Basic Books, Inc., New York
440 pages, $23 50

This is the first in a series of books expected to come from a Project for Human Potential at Harvard University.

Howard Gardner has been working for a dozen years or so on the development in normal and gifted children of symbol-using capacities, particularly in the arts, as part of Harvard Project Zero.

Project Zero got its name in 1967, when philosopher Nelson Goodman was asked to initiate a cognitive study of the arts. "Well, there's nothing known about that," Goodman said, leading to what Gardner calls an "appropriate if enigmatic name."

Gardner's new book makes the case for the existence of "multiple intelligences," a theory which has been around for a long time and can be described, approximately, as the opposite of an I.Q.

In other words, Gardner says, instead of assuming that we are born with a single "intelligence," which can be measured by a test and determines whether each of us is "bright," or not—an idea that bogs us down in some very limiting ways of encouraging development in children—it may be time to consider the evidence for relatively autonomous "intelligences" that can be and are fashioned and combined in a number of different and enormously productive ways.

The educational implications of a theory of multiple intelligences are considerable, Gardner points out.

"Training and heightening of the intellect is certainly in the international air," he says, citing the World Bank's Report on Human Development, the Club of Rome's essay on anticipatory learning, and Venezuela's Project on Human Intelligence as three recent, visible examples.

So, what is "an intelligence," and how many are there?

Gardner wants to make it clear, once and for all, that there is no way to agree on any list of three, seven, or three hundred intelligences, unless we confine the list to "intelligences to do what?"—like sail a boat or succeed in a technical university, for example.

As to definition, he says a human "intelligence," *must enable the individual to resolve genuine problems or difficulties that he or she encounters and, when appropriate, to create an effective product.*

It must also entail *the potential for finding or creating problems, thereby laying the groundwork for the acquisition of new knowledge.*

A primary characteristic of an intelligence may also be that it can be embodied in a symbolic system—talking, picturing, and mathematics are examples of human symbolic systems.

In this book, stressing every step of the way that he is talking not about "physically verifiable entities," but about "potentially useful scientific constructs," Gardner discusses *linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinsthetic, and personal* intelligences.

In each of these, a human being may find "powerful expression," which is probably innate but still requires enormous effort and endless practice, and may emerge as what we in our culture call "an artist."

Gardner calls poetry, for example, "linguistic intelligence exemplified," though certainly it seems that everyone has "linguistic intelligence" at one level or another, as witness the speedy acquisition of language by all human children.

The differences between individual children appears to be greater in musical intelligence, where some can match large segments of a song by the time they are two and others still have difficulty with melody at ages five or six. But the significant point here, Gardner says, is that, wherever the child starts on the scale of musical intelligence, *there is little further musical development after the schcol years begin.*

"Whereas, in the case of language, there is considerable emphasis in the school on further linguistic attainments, music occupies a relatively low niche in our culture, and so musical illiteracy is acceptable."

It is interesting that Gardner finds composers the quintessential possessors of musical intelligence.

In contrast to linguistic and musical capacities, the competence he calls "logical-mathematical intelligence" is "a form of thought that can be traced to confrontation with the world of objects," according to Gardner.

In this field, he defers to the path-breaking research of the Swiss developmental psychologist Jean Piaget, who took the view that all knowledge, though particularly logical-mathematical understanding, which was his primary focus, comes from one's actions upon the world.

Gardner reminds us of an interesting point: "While the products fashioned by individuals gifted in language and music are readily available to a wide public, the situation with mathematics is at the opposite extreme. Except for a few initiates, most of us can only admire from afar the ideas and works of mathematicians."

But after he explores the intuition, excitement, and isolation of creative mathematical thinking, Gardner finds a solid link between it and all other forms of problemsolving: the mathematician and the scientist, like all of us in addressing our own dilemmas, he notes, must do the hard work of ferreting out analogies, developing ideas, creating order, and finding—and accepting—proof.

Spatial intelligence has been neglected in studies of children, Gardner believes. Its centrality in the visual arts is self-evident, in composition, perspective, and design, and it would be interesting to know if the indifference of most researchers to the topic contributes to failure of schools to develop spatial ability (and therefore perhaps ability in the visual arts) in children who do not have it intuitively.

Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, like all the others, is best seen in its most competent individuals, such as dancers, actors, and athletes, but like the other intelligences, we all have it, and the open question is whether the superior abilities of some individuals stem more from talent or from practice.

Again, Gardner opens a suddenly important thought for education, when he mentions that the body is "the vessel of the individual's sense of self," presumably a powerful argument for cultivation of bodily intelligence.

Gardner's final category is the "personal intelligences," which he describes generally as *access to one's own feeling life* and *ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals*. Just how much these develop naturally, and how much they can be tutored, is still not clear, but Gardner probably sums it up best by saying, "The less an individual understands his own feelings, the more he will fall prey to them."

At the end of the book, Gardner critiques his own theories. Many readers will do so, also. But the book vividly illuminates a point: we must be careful, in educating our children, not to forget that there are various paths to intellectual development.